



**SECRETARY OF DEFENSE  
1000 DEFENSE PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1000**

**JUN 11 2019**

**MEMORANDUM FOR ALL DOD PERSONNEL**

**SUBJECT: Political Activities**

All DoD personnel, Service members, and civilian employees alike, swear an oath to protect and defend the Constitution of the United States. Those of us privileged to serve our Nation, in and out of uniform, in the DoD must be the epitome of American values and ethics. Our mission, to protect and defend the Nation, is apolitical.

DoD has a long-standing policy of encouraging its personnel to carry out the obligations of citizenship, which includes permitting certain political activities. However, our policy and tradition also limit active partisan political activities or actions that could appear to imply DoD sponsorship, approval, or endorsement of a political candidate, campaign, or cause. All Service members should familiarize themselves with our policy in DoD Directive 1344.10. While many civilian DoD employees may take an active part in certain political activities, the extent and nature of their participation is limited by the Hatch Act and DoD policy. Regardless of whether civilian employees may engage in political activity, they may never engage in such activity while on-duty or in a Federal building.

I call on leaders at all levels in the Department to reinforce the apolitical nature of military and civilian service and professionalism, while ensuring all personnel remain free to exercise the responsibilities of citizenship as laws and regulations allow.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Patrick M. Shanahan".

Patrick M. Shanahan  
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